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world, and they flung it at each other proudly, for it stood for the experience of making their way among strangers and earning sums with which to fill a large corial, and much else.

The men who had remained on the river found special pleasure in imparting to these returning ones some weighty gossip.

"At Gankwe they are burying Sedefo's younger brother," they said as the boats passed each other, and they went into the details of Zimbi's death and the kunu which was decimating the family.

"Asikanu has been charged with adultery by Matafo. Asikanu's family is offering a great fine, but it is far from settled yet."

All this was by way of preface. To come to the real news without casual preliminaries would have been the way of a child, but a Man Nengere, a full-grown Negro, knew better.

"Last year a white man came here with another one—a doctor. He said he would come back with his wife. He has brought his wife. He says they are going up the river. He says they are going to the Granman's country."

Up and down the great stretches of water as the boats passed each other, the news was given. Word and conjecture floated down river and into the creeks, reaching even the lower river Awka villages.

"The Bakra told me Awka is an African word. There is a place in Africa called Awka, and a people in Africa called Awka people. He knows Africa!"

"Kye, ba! Kye, mati!"

Word and conjecture were carried up river in the boats which were being poled upstream against the rapids. It would be some time yet before there would be legends, and songs about the American whites who had made their way into this bush. Now there could only be talk. The Bakra had a machine which talked back to you, if you talked into its horn, and when it talked back, it said the same thing you did, sang back the same song, and if you laughed, it laughed, too.

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Ah, but they knew each other.

Bayo began paddling faster to keep up with him.

"There is to be a council meeting at Gankwe. I had to hurry away last night, and I must get back there in time. We must have permission from the spirit of the dead man to go back to work, and Sedefo has to find out if he can start up the river, and if he does go, we must all pray to the ancestors because four men will be going from Gankwe, and the *Gran Sembe*—the village elders—have things to decide . . . "

Now, fearing that he might have said too much, he doubled his speed, and Bayo understood that the other preferred to be alone. They belonged to different clans, Bayo to the same as the headman of the tribe, and the Gankwe people to another. Gankwe was sending important men to take the Bakra up the river. The chief's own brother, Asikanu, was to go, although it was said he was being sent out of the way while his adultery case was being settled. There had been talk about this case up and down the river. The Gankwe clan head had given a chief's sanctuary to the offender because he was his own brother, people said. Well, if the injured husband committed suicide as he threatened, and sent a kunu to the family of the brother, and even the village and clan, it would be an ugly thing. But so it was with trouble about women. It was as they said,

"Sleep is death
Woman kills man."

He half chanted the proverb and smiled, for he looked forward to his trip up the river with an eye to a visit in Lamé, where the women knew how to love. And he began singing the seketi song which he liked so well. Both the melody and the words were old, but he sang the refrain as if it were quite his own—whatever hardships there were on the river, at Lamé one slept with the women!

At the village of Akunkun an old man and a boy of about nine were at the landing place ready to start. Bayo

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KUNU

when the time came, his brothers and sisters
and sisters' children would gather to divide what wealth 428
there was. The greatest share would, of course, go to the 168
brother who would marry the widow, but all the others [587]
would get something.

"And his children, the children he made, would they get anything?"

"Why no, the children he made are his wife's children. They belong to the family of his wife!"

"But suppose he cared for them very much. . . . "

"Then he might have made them some presents now and then when he was alive, but even then some people say it is better not to give them too much. When a man dies his possessions go to his family. If this man's children, who really belong to his wife, were to take things now, they would get a kunu for it, and they might get another kunu which the father had, for if they got his possessions, his kunu would go to them, too, and there would perhaps be one in their own family that had come to them through their mother. No man or woman wants this."

It is kunu, then, which sees to it that the tribal law of succession and inheritance through the female line is not [611] violated.

4

There was the case of Asikanu, our paddler, who was the 115
brother of the head of an important clan, which gave us still another instance of the workings of kunu. Asikanu was, in his own right, not a negligible figure. When his brother died, it might be he who would succeed to the headship of the clan. When the other paddlers wanted things of us, they would come to ask in his name. "It is not a small thing when Asikanu asks," they would say. "He is a big man; he is the brother of our chief. You must not refuse him."

Asikanu had a way with the women, although it would 684 ●
have been best if at least one of them had resisted him. She was married, and, when her husband discovered her infidelity, she went to Asikanu. Now this was as it should

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684 [796] be. The Earth Mother, who is the giver of fertility, takes the adulterous woman who is with child under her protection, and no one may harm her. But the guilty man must make redress to the betrayed husband. Fines must be paid by the adulterer, and there is the beating which the husband administers. This beating has its ritual. The culprit, at the time that is set, comes out to the place where the injured husband and his family wait. They attack him with bare fists, although the Kromanti arm obias are sometimes slipped down on clenched hands, and with these serious wounds can be inflicted. With or without the iron arm bands, the beating is a serious matter, and the man who has committed the trespass is severely mishandled, unless he can get away from his assailants and run into the bush. In the bush he has sanctuary, and at the end of some time may come back to his village. The gods will not give a weakling husband, or one who is not clever enough to take his revenge when it is offered, a second chance.

At times this beating is a merry affair. This happens when the adulterer's family tries to protect him, and then the matter becomes a two-family brawl, or, if the village is a [628] large one with more than one clan substantially represented in it, it may become a fight between two clans. Once, in a village near the railhead, a man was killed in such a fight, and then white police stepped in, and the murderer went to prison.

[622] [798] A chief, however, can give the culprit sanctuary, and Asikanu, being a chief's brother, was protected by the chief while negotiations were being carried on in his behalf. Now he was sent away from home to be one of our paddlers so that the enraged husband might be dealt with—time helps to cool anger. This was important in Asikanu's case, since the husband of the woman who had gone to Asikanu would consent to no fine, however large, and seemed, furthermore, to have misgivings about the manner in which the ritual beating would be conducted. "I will kill myself," he had been heard to declare. "I will kill myself, and give them all kunu. My *yorka*—ghost—will come to

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trouble them, and I will give the family a kunu, and the clan, too, because the chief has shielded him. I am powerless against the chief. I will kill myself."

A clan kunu is a thing to dread. It must be averted, whatever the hazards. And so, while they held council at Gankwe with the husband and his family, Asikanu was away with the Bakra. . . .

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At Apresina an old woman sent word that she wished to see us. She was so old and so ill that we had to cross half the length of the village to come to her, so that she might see what a white man and a white woman were like.

"Well, how is it in the city?" she asked. "How is it among you whites?"

She had heard, she told us, that everything was quiet in the city, that it was as if people slept night and day. Crops did not grow as they should. People were sick. Was it so? And without waiting for us to answer, she spoke again.

"But it must be so. So many, many black people took their own lives, before the time of running away. There must be kunu there." She assured us that it had to be so. How else but that the children of those whites should pay for the old abuses? . . .

And in the Granman's village we heard of kunu again.

"Do you know what they say in the city?" Granman Yankuso said one late afternoon, addressing several of his favorite village chiefs. "They say we are good men here in the bush, because we believe in kunu. In the city, where they do not believe in kunu any more, they are not afraid to use magic to enrich themselves, or hurt their neighbors. In the city they say that, friends."

There were the usual responses from the chiefs.

"So it is."

"True, true."

"Yes, master of the realm."

We looked out at the shadows across the carved door of the council house, that superb rendering of the Earth Mother and her attendant symbols of procreation and abundance, beyond into the great clearing where we could

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we found that for the krutu to act as a jury was an important part of its work. The krutu not only saw to the making of law, but it was also the medium for levying penalties upon those who transgressed law. The same krutu that legislated could judge infractions of its legislation. In its hands was the power to enforce the decisions it had made against the offender.

We had wondered whether, in this Suriname bush, the African court which so characterized the civilization of the ancestors of these people had survived. When we heard of the supernatural vengeance which followed upon infractions of custom, we sought to find out if people took the matter of punishment into their own hands, if kunu was reinforced by human assistance.

"Ai, mati," a chief once said to us, "kunu is strong, but the krutu is strong, too."

If a man had sworn an oath against another, had called down upon another a curse of some evil spirit, or asked that the gods make a man impotent, or that they stop the womb of his wife from conceiving, or if a man murdered by means other than witchcraft, then he was judged by a krutu. A man who had destroyed a canoe belonging to another—a serious offense, for, as the Bush Negro says, "Had our forefathers not had the wisdom to build canoes, we would still be slaves to the Bak'a"—he, too, would come before this court. The adulterer would be brought here for the assessment of his fine.

When the krutu sat as a court, the accused was not without the right of defense. If it were thieving, or adultery, or the telling of falsehoods, or trespass, or the destruction of the property of another, where the kunu involved was not of the greatest, then the case was judged on the basis of the evidence. In the court, the interests of the one who was accused were cared for by one of the elders of his *mbe*, his relative and a fellow member of his own great family. But when the crime was one of the greater ones, then methods other than the sole use of testimony were employed. Evidence was necessary, but evidence was not

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623 enough if the accused persisted in denying such crimes.
695 In that case he called upon the gods to witness that the sin of which he was accused had not been committed by him, and this called for trial by ordeal.

695 The ordeal as a judicial measure was not unknown to our own civilization. In Africa it flourished in the native courts before the coming of the white man, and, it is whispered, still persists in the Suriname bush. The facts as we tell them, we cannot vouch for from our own experience. They were given us independently by two men who have spent many years among the Saramacca people, men who speak the language fluently and who for long periods have lived in this big bush of the Saramacca tribe. Other facts which they told us we had been able to corroborate. These whispers, however, we could not check, for few Bush Negroes would admit that they knew anything of the ordeal.

One way of trial by ordeal was to "*bebe so'i*," to drink the oath. It was utilized in accusations of witchcraft and sorcery. The priests and the elders prepared a drink of deadly poison. Over it magic incantations were pronounced by the obia men. The oath of innocence was taken, and the accused drank. If the potion was retained and the man died, his guilt had been proved, but if the drink was vomited, he was innocent. What his redress was if he were proved not guilty, we were not able to discover.

"If a man is guilty of *wisi*—of evil magic," our friend said, when he told us the story, "he would be afraid of the oath. When it came time to drink, no matter how brave he was, he would confess."

695 Then there was the proof offered in adultery cases,
684 described to us by the other man who knew the ways of the Saramacca folk. When both man and woman who had been accused of misconduct denied their guilt, the procedure this man had witnessed was this. The woman was made to kneel before the assembled krutu of the village. While she knelt there, a buzzard's feather was put into water, in a calabash of the kind they call gubi, and the water was

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treated with obia. An obia man now addressed the woman who denied the charge that had been lodged against her, restating the accusation and her denial. Then he asked her once more if she were guilty, and when the answer was still "No," the test was applied.

Through the woman's tongue the quill of the feather, which had been treated with magic, was thrust. When the entire length of the feather had passed through the tongue, then it was that the proof was had. If the woman's tongue neither swelled nor showed blood, she was innocent.

But whether it be trial by ordeal or through the taking of testimony, punishment by the krutu went along with punishment by the spirits. Only incest, we learned, was not punishable by the court. That was for kunu alone to avenge.

6

Once more the krutu was in session. Where the men had "gone aside," we did not know, but while we sat in the krutu house, alone with Moana Yankuso, we heard nothing.

The Granman had spoken little. Were our hammocks tied well the night before? Were we satisfied with the arrangements he had made for the storing of our supplies?

What were the elders deciding? We could not but wonder with anxiety. Would this krutu, after the fashion of the bush, where time meant so little, come to no decision? Was the answer to be one that had been previously arranged?

Chief Sungi was the first to speak.

"G'aman, we have gone aside. Your captains and bassias have spoken together. We say, the white man has come. The white man must eat. Let all be told to bring gifts, that you may feed those who have come to you."

"So it is," was the Granman's response. "Friends, great thanks to you. What you have said is good. Let all return to their villages. Let all tell their people that the white man has come. Let all come with gifts, that we may eat."

There was a chorus of affirmations. The Granman arose.

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morning, they tell us when we call on them. That is the black man's way.

"You white people have money, you have fine houses, you wear clothes, you can count. They tell me that you say in your books all people must be friends. But you have wars. If white people kill white people, then *mati*—friend—how will it be with black people living among the whites?"

Granman Yankuso rose, when he said this, and took from the chains of the suspended lamp a folded envelope. He handed it to us, and from it we took out a letter on the stationery of the League of Nations, signed by its Secre[illegible] Sir Eric Drummond. As we were reading this, he lef[illegible] council house and soon returned with a larger envelope, which he had kept uncreased, and from it brought out a photograph of the Council of the League of Nations in session. They were his proud possessions. While the World War lasted there was no work for the Bush Negroes on the river. They could not earn the money they needed to buy cloths for marrying and powder and rum for ceremonial usage. The Bush Negroes called it a "great money famine," in the way of their Anansi stories which so often began with "This was a time of great famine." Through a missionary on the upper river, the Granman learned of the war, and through him later of the League, which the missionary had undoubtedly brought up as the white man's defense against the challenge of the black tribal head, who asked, "How will it be with black people living among the whites?"

It was then that the Granman through this same missionary addressed himself to the white rulers far away, telling of the fear of the blacks, and counseling them the wisdom of peace!

4

In the council house Granman Moana Yankuso was host to the Gankwe men. They were there to take their leave of him before starting down river. Asikanu, the handsome brother of the Gankwe clan head, who was sent away from his village while the elders were deciding upon his adultery

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643 684 574 576 fine, sat between Sedefo, whose bench was moved forward a little, and Angita. The younger men sat with bodies half-turned toward the wall, out of respect for the Granman, the older ones, with their faces averted from him.

The Granman was speaking, telling a story.

643 684 538 "Ai, mati . . . " he said, in his precise, formal way, laying stress on each syllable, "in our bush, the gods be praised, men are men. There was a man near here, who saw a woman he liked, and he took her. He had a loving eye, he was young. Ai, mati, what is a beating to a man when he is young? But the proverb says, 'All that is in the darkness will come to light.' Dealings with women always come to light too soon. That man got a beating, mati! He came out into the clearing, his head held high, like any man whom young girls follow with their eyes. But waiting for him was the husband of the woman, and the men of his family, and. . . . "

"Well, so it is, G'ama'," said Sedefo, with the careful modulation which showed that he, too, was schooled in the way of the important councils.

"Ya-hai, G'ama'," said Asikanu, more briefly.

Granman Yankuso now went on with his story, bringing to his recital all the detail of the punishment of the adulterer, without quickening the telling of his story even when he spoke the words which described the sound of the blows.

"Yes, master of the realm," said Sedefo, his head still averted, but leaning his body forward a little as he spoke, so that he somewhat shielded Asikanu from the direct gaze of the Granman, yet managing this clever gesture so that it had the air of rapt interest.

"K[illegible]e-kere, G'ama'," Asikanu breathed, almost inaudibly.

As the Granman recounted his tale, Asikanu's spine twitched as though every blow mentioned was that instant being leveled at him, as though he himself were lying head down in the dust of the clearing, while blows rained down upon him, and the Kromanti iron bands cut gashes into his proud face and arms and body.

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But Sedefo, splendid actor that he was, betrayed in no way that he was aware of his friend's discomfiture, except that his interpolations became more and more spirited, balancing in the intensity of his voice the formality of the Granman's speech.

"True, true!" he said, with excitement.

"By Ando, G'ama'!"

When the tale was finished, the Granman became reminiscent. In his youth he had been like the rest. What did it mean to be a man and not to assert one's manhood when a handsome woman was to be had? He was on the Marowyne then. Did they want to beat him? He had said, "Very well." As many as wished could come at him—but one at a time.

As he spoke now, he clenched his fist and struck the table with it so that the table shook and the guns which lay underneath it rattled.

He was no longer young, but his answer to people who threatened would still be the same, he continued.

"Tell them that everywhere on the river, mati," he finished with a smile, and he cleared his throat as a signal for the bassia to come and pour out drinks for his visitors, before they left his village.

And how was their clan head who had been ailing? he asked, with friendly solicitude.

5

Granman Yankuso was telling about his great ancestors.

He looked particularly well that night. His smock-like coat was a deep blue, and over it was a print of orange and black worn toga fashion.

There was Bagida, one of the first to escape to the bush, and Dosi who made the Kasito clan, and Ajako who was a Matchau Negro, a man of the Granman's own clan, and it was he who had fought against the whites and had freed his people. There were Mother Bedu, and Mother Fakia, and the great Abini family which bore Alabi, whom the peccary had helped to freedom, so that Alabi's people, the Awana Negroes, to this day did not eat pingo.

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BAYO, THE PLAYBOY

"Will Bayo be married before we leave the bush?" we asked, telling her that only a short time would see us returning to our own country.

We had often talked of marriage with Bayo on our trip up river and had offered to make up what he lacked in gifts and money that we might witness the festivities of marriage. He had, of course, promised to have matters arranged.

Bayo's aunt laughed, however, when she heard the question, and turned to the other woman who was with us in the dimly lighted hut.

"Did you hear what the white man asks?" she called out to her companion. "White man, let me tell you something. Bayo is a long way from marrying yet. Why, his girl's breasts haven't begun to come yet!"

It seemed that Bayo had also to see to many things before he could marry. He had not yet cut the field for his mother-in-law, nor had he made any of the carvings which he needed to give his betrothed and her mother, for Bayo was a poor carver.

"Bayo has cunning in his eyes, and his head, but his fingers have no cunning, Bak'a. . . . But you know this, Bayo is strong."

Her train of thought turned at the last phrase to our journey up river. Had we traveled well with Bayo? Had he got on with the other men? Awa, she knew that people liked him. It was the obia he had, and his own gods, but his gods were bad, too.

"When he was in his mother's womb, he troubled her much. He tore at her. Ai, she had no happy time of it with Bayo."

We remembered the incest kunu in Bayo's family, which lay in wait for all its members, killing off one by one until the line was wiped out. We ventured a cautious question.

"You are the sister of Bayo's mother?"

The answer, however, did not take us to kunu, but rather to the iron on her arm.

"Ai, and of his father who is now dead. In our family we have strong gods. It is these that have come to Bayo. . . . "

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
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342 556 ings inside, to give the idea of affluence. The women looking into the dim interior are awed by the numerous boxes. They are usually empty, however.

837 684 When men go away on hunting or fishing trips, adultery frequently occurs. If it is discovered by the husband's family, they seize the wife and beat her. Her own family rushes to her aid, and a general mêlée ensues. The village is soon in [22] an uproar, and to the captain belongs the unpleasant and thankless task of stopping the fight. There is considerable excitement for a few minutes. Many a hot listless evening is provided with a momentary thrill because someone's wife has been careless. After the mêlée the wife is usually forgiven, and the village returns to its normal routine.

586 Divorce is easy. A married woman merely informs the bosseia and captain, and moves out of her husband's hut, going back to her parents or to her lover. Even this formality may be dispensed with if she simply locks the door and refuses to let her husband enter. There is an heroic simplicity to this procedure. The husband may do the same, divorcing any one of his wives without assigning any reason for his action. The parting—we hesitate to distinguish it as a divorce—is usually on the woman's initiative; men leave their wives not so often as their wives leave them. Usually a husband will endure a wife until domestic dissension makes his life unbearable. Among women the motives for divorce vary; a husband's impotence is a very adequate reason, for of all masculine virtues the Djuka women esteem virility the most. Impotence seems to be common among primitive peoples after

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831 necessary food) than by a sentimental motive. It is very rare to meet among them the appearance of sincere and lasting love for a woman; that is sometimes seen, but it is the exception.

562 It is not enough to say that they have few emotional feelings with respect to women. In the conversations heard in the evening around the campfires a deep contempt is expressed on this subject; they even speak of the Boni women as of a foreign and almost enemy nation; they consider them besides as half irresponsible. This attitude shows through in the custom concern- [684] ing adultery, which decrees that the lover be beaten but not the wife.

581 Among the Refugee Blacks marriage is in fact a contract of maintenance between a man and woman, which provides for the execution of such-and-such work by the one for the benefit of the other, and for the wife the obligation to be faithful. [586] This contract can be cancelled unilaterally without any sort of indemnity. [765] It does not directly involve the relatives of the spouses; it involves them only in case of the death of one spouse, for the surviving spouse must /138/ put up with the subservience [613] of mourning. It is principally for this reason that a marriage must be officially known by both lineages, and that a divorce must be proclaimed without delay.

582 613 614 Exogamy. Marriage is forbidden between persons of the same lineage. In expressing this prohibition the Refugee Blacks employ the word bɛɛ (lineage in the restricted sense) and not the word lo.

613 As we have seen in studying the situation of the various lineages, the various Boni kin groups follow different rules in this regard:

--The Dju lineage, which forms only one single group from the genealogical point of view, does not allow marriage between its members;

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613 614 In general, one can say that the law of exogamy is maintained firmly within the fractions which know completely their genealogy. Union between classificatory "brothers" and "sisters" belonging to different fractions remains always prohibited in principle, but as for all the institutions of the Refugee Blacks, the prohibition ceases to be observed if fear of suprahuman sanctions weaken. /139/

This is what explains the difference in attitude among the [784] lineages. In the Awara Bakka lineage, people do not remember that marriages between fractions may have been followed by maladies or misfortunes, and for this reason they are no longer feared.

In the Kotika lineage it was the same, but an event which [789] took place in 1958 threw consternation. A young woman, Awini [784] (K1, E37, Boniville), died suddenly, and divination showed that [761] she had been struck down by the kunu for having married her classificatory brother Sintamann (K3, E145, Boniville). However, they belonged to two different fractions and their common relationship was the farthest removed possible in the lineage (tenth-degree relatives).

684 688 784 Pikadu. The offense against exogamy, pikadu (1), incest in the

1. This word appears to come from the Portuguese pecado, sin.

broad sense, is considered an offense against society and against religious law; it exposes the lineage to the vengeance of the gods who exercise the kunu on it. But in the thought of the Refugee Blacks, if incest unleashes the functioning of existing kunu, it [114] does not create new ones. What has been written on this subject by several authors seems inexact to us, at least for the Boni. [761] In the example put forth above Awini's death was attributed to the kunu brought to bear for a long time by the yorka of a man assassinated in former times by a member of the lineage.

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684 688 Committing pikadu is one of the most serious offenses that a Refugee Black can commit; of course, as in the rest of the moral prescriptions, no abstract principle is called on: the elders teach the children from their earliest years: "If you commit pikadu, you will fall ill or die." [613] The head of the lineage inflicts severe punishments on the guilty people to boot: for the man, to make a large number of planks with an adze; for the woman, to prepare and winnow as preparation for the next bɔko dɛ several touques /cans/ of rice, a long and tedious job.

588 However, if in spite of insults and blows a man and woman of the same bɛɛ absolutely insist on marrying, people end up, for the sake of peace and quiet, by accepting the accomplished fact. [769] [778] [782] They go to the fraga tiki to make an offering of tafia to the ancestors to ask them to forgive the offense committed. No reprobation extends to the children born of this union.

613 588 [684] In the Awara Bakka lineage, which has practically rejected the law of exogamy, the principle of a sanction remains and there is a pretense of chasing the guilty ones across the village.

Not being able to use coercion and not having the right to expel a member of the lineage, captain and council can exert no material sanction.

613 684 The same notion of pikadu is attached to unions between persons of the same patrilineage, although these patrilineages have no effective organization and exist only by the transmission of the fundamental interdiction, bwasi kina.

[619] Before concluding an official or even clandestine union, the man and woman make sure that they do not have the same bwasi kina and in such a case give up their project; that, even if they are from different tribes, for example a Boni woman and a Saramaka.

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[684] [688] [984] This prohibition is of a purely religious nature and does not entail any social sanctions; those concerned are convinced that in such a case a suprahuman sanction would strike them in the form of sickness or accident.

[582] [613] Prohibitions limiting marriage. Outside of the great interdiction, pikadu, which is attached to unions within one matrilineage and one patrilineage, two prohibitions limiting marriage are found among the Refugee Blacks, which they express thus:

[595] [589] --I cannot have two wives at the same time in the same lineage. For example I am forbidden to marry two "sisters" at the same time, but if I break with my wife, I may marry her classificatory "sister" or any other woman of the same lineage;

[835] [587] --I may not have relations, even passing ones, with a woman who has been married to my brother by the same mother; in particular, if my brother has just died, I shall not be able to marry his widow.

The Boni are not capable of explaining the deep reasons for these interdictions, but they interpret them as purely social [684] and not religious prohibitions. The offender is simply threatened with being beaten.

[171] The first of these rules seems very widely accepted in Black Africa, as much in patrilineal societies as in a matrilineal system.

[171] The second of these rules is characteristic in the Akan (Agni; Baoulé) culture area and shows that the family custom of the Refugee Blacks is related much more directly to that of the Agni-Ashanti group than to that of the Dahomey.

[184] [589] [114] One can note that this rule is exactly contrary to the Saramaka custom, which obliges the widow to marry one of the brothers of the dead man; this custom has been interpreted by several authors as coming from imitation of the levirate of the Jews, with which certain rebels were acquainted (it is known that among the slaveowners there were many Jews).

/145 cont./

582 Generally speaking, the custom of the Refugee Blacks used to consider as immoral the marriage of a very young girl to an old man, or of a very young boy to an adult woman.
588 198 The weakening of family morals is clearly demonstrated by two events which happened during the summer of 1960. A boy of thirteen and a half, K... of Boniville, left his guardian to join an Assisi woman, A.... 20 years older than he and with a very bad reputation to boot; some months later his example was imitated /146/ by a boy of 14 who began living with a
[684] [613] woman of 29. Nothing like that had ever been seen, and people inveighed against the scandal of it; but in both cases, guardians and lineage heads showed themselves incapable of making their authority respected by force.

882 [562] Marriage of girls. It can still be said (although things are in the process of changing rapidly) that girls, kweyi umɛ, occupy a place apart in the thought of the Refugee Blacks; the reprobation which embraces women does not extend to them.
882 834 [291] People say that girls "have good manners," and in fact most of them, although naked except for a little apron, have a reserved attitude, a becoming bearing, which contrast with the attitude of the married women. To tell the truth, this virtue is not so much due to natural inclinations as to the strict
[593] vigilance with which their mothers surround them. The mothers literally do not let them out of their sight and permit no man to speak to them out of their presence. "Until dawn, until the cock crows, she keeps vigil," says the song, alluding to the mother who watches over her daughter's virtue. If a girl
[834] [599] comes to lose her virginity without being properly married, pɛti na yu, "established in a house," it is a dishonor for her mother and her near relatives.

/148 cont./

584 539 I do not know whether thou lovest me, whether thou wilt answer yes or no; perhaps I am not so handsome as thou, but I cannot help loving thee. If thou lovest me, tell me clearly. I have come, I have attached my boat to a rock, I have wet my feet before reaching land (2)."

2. High-flown words to which no precise meaning can be attached; it is a kind of verbal music whose formulas vary infinitely.

"Come back tomorrow, come back, I cannot answer thee today. I cannot."

"I know for today, but not for tomorrow (3); yield to me,

3. One must understand: It is necessary to decide today.

be mine. I shall give thee the garment (4)."

4. The man lays down one of his garments at the home of the woman who has agreed to marry him.

584 Our departure on our tour the next day put an end to his attempts for the time being!

836 584 It often happens that the girl allows herself to be seduced; her mother soon learns of it from the village people. She flies into a passion, beats her daughter to obtain a confession without [558] which she can obtain nothing from the supposed seducer. It is an extreme shame for a mother not to receive the price of her

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836 684 [558] daughter's virginity: the other women will make fun of her and as for the men, they will be unanimous in laughing cruelly at the new trick played on the women. Now certain girls refuse obstinately to confess, or they have already had several adventures, so that nobody succeeds in knowing the truth. After many recriminations and arguments the affair proceeds no further.

If it has been possible to identify the seducer with certainty, the mother, arming herself with a stick, goes from village to village to find him; his uncles intervene and end by settling the business by asking the mother to accept, since there is nothing else to do, the payment for virginity. This sum absolutely must be paid; if the young man were not able to do it, his uncles would pay it for him even if they have to turn against him ultimately. The mother accepts the payment, honor is safe.

583 In many cases the couple consider themselves as joined, at least temporarily; the man prepares, if he is hard working, to build a house for his wife. If he is not hard working, he simply promises to make one for her some day; in reality he has spared himself this great labor; the woman will have to wait for years unless her mother or one of her uncles dies, bequeathing her his or her house. /149/

836 684 Observation in Boniville in October, 1956:

A village woman comes to complain to Fintiman that his nephew and ward Doni has deflowered her daughter Elina, 15 years old, in July of the same year. She learned it indirectly, and the daughter expressly confessed it. Doni admitted the facts; he promised to pay the indemnity at the end of the border-fixing mission when he has received his pay. Elina continues to wear the kwey until further orders and does not show any embarrassment. Doni comes back in the evening. I hear Fintiman reprimand him, but only for form's sake: "Deflowering a girl when one does not intend to live with her is something which is

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836 not done." He advises Doni above all to remit to the girl the
• 684 payment of her akka, namely two camisas, a string of white beads which she will wear on her left wrist, and a bottle of syrup which she will offer to her akka while drinking it. Doni does not bother to face the mother and does not intend to see the girl again; it is his sister Maria who will attend to the errand.

That done, the mother will accept the fait accompli and will not show her anger. She will wait for the payment.

589 One also hears talk rather often of the clandestine con-
936 summation of a properly arranged marriage, the engaged couple wishing thus to force the hand of their guardians and obtain their freedom sooner.

587 Remarriage of widows or divorcées. It does not give rise to any payment, but the marriage proposal is made to the woman's uncles and the head of her lineage in the same form as for a girl. In such a case it is no longer a question of asking for an authorization (a man would have to have the worst reputation for the woman's lineage to refuse the marriage) but to obtain the benediction of the ancestors on the household. Moreover, it is
[613] very important for the heads of both lineages to be notified of this marriage, for in case of the death of husband or wife the other will have to bear the weight of the mourning.

581 Women are guided in their choice by sensual attraction but largely also by self-interest. They take care to marry a man who has, as it is said among us, some future, a position. The owners of outboard motors do not fail to pass at reduced speed by the villages in order to be admired by the women.

Men who have a reputation for "working hard" (for work is the sole wealth in Boni country) are frequently chosen by girls even though they may have one or two wives already.

606 /152 cont./
Relations between husband and mother-in-law. As is commonly observed in Africa, the husband has the duty to respect his mother-in-law, to have a reserved attitude toward her. /153/ A curious custom exists on this subject among the Refugee Blacks: If he inadvertently arrives at the village wharf at the moment when she is bathing, he must pay her compensation in the form of a camisa. This is a reciprocal obligation.

[513] He may sleep under the same roof as she when the village is crowded, but not habitually.

606 607 On the other hand, the custom of the Refugee Blacks differs sharply from African customs on one important point: it does not call for any material obligation toward the mother-in-law or the wife's brothers. The husband is not at all required to give them presents or to contribute toward their maintenance. In fact, the wife gives her mother part of what her husband gives her.

• 684 Adultery. The custom of the Refugee Blacks concerning adultery is extremely curious. The outraged husband has the right to inflict a public punishment on the lover, which he must stand without defending himself. In the absence of the husband his brother is qualified to strike in his place. This punishment must take place in a village in the presence of witnesses capable of intervening if the punishment goes beyond accepted limits.

Only bare fists may be used.

A man can always escape too brutal a punishment by taking refuge in the water. His adversary may not follow him into it under pain of a severe punishment by the grand man. He can also take refuge in the bush.

[692] The husband's honor being thus publicly restored, the row is over; in such cases some men are seen to beat the wife in addition, but this is not the general case; the true custom does not call for the wife to be beaten because she is considered irresponsible. She can either be repudiated or threatened

/153 cont./
with repudiation in case of a second offense. The rule is to repudiate her, under pain of ridicule.

In 1951 G..., of Kotika village, was informed that his wife A..., of Asisi village, 25 years old, was deceiving him with a boy of the same age named K.... The first time he encountered K in a village he took issue with him; K... confessed without difficulty. G... delivered a strong punch which threw him to the ground, and that was all. He did not administer any punishment to his wife but immediately let her know that he was repudiating her. Some time after, K... asked to be reconciled with him. He asked his pardon and gave him a bottle of tafia (this is obligatory for reconciliation). Since, the two men have again been friends.

It also happens that the grand man levies a more or less stiff fine on the guilty man.

According to the elders, adultery was rare in former times. If a woman was tired of her husband, she divorced him openly, but she did not deceive him. Nowadays it seems to be rather frequent.

Divorce. The Refugee Blacks divorce each other as easily as they join together; in general it is the woman who decides to break up the union because she finds her husband too poor, too lazy, or simply because she wants to change. /154/

In the case of divorce the woman keeps all that her husband has given to her or made for her (utensils, house, boat), but of course the man keeps all his own belongings; this rupture changes nothing about the possession of property since no object was owned jointly.

The rule is the following: at the time of the marriage the man puts down symbolically several personal objects (fabrics, utensils) in the woman's home. As long as these objects are in her home the marriage remains in force, the wife is held to fidelity or at the very least, if there is adultery, it is regarded as such and entails the sanction related above.

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as such and entails the sanction related above. But the wife has the absolute right, even in her husband's absence, to break the contract unilaterally by taking back to the head of her husband's lineage the objects left with her. From this moment on, no more can be said to her, she is no longer guilty of adultery, and she can take another husband forthwith; in case of the first husband's death she will not have to stand the weight of the mourning. All that her husband has made for her: house, boat, etc... is kept without counterpart.

No Boni leaving on a three-month trip is sure of finding his wife again. He may very well find another man installed in his place, officially, without his being able to say anything. As for those who leave for a long time, this is practically a certainty.

This is a misfortune which however they take philosophically, thinking above all of the work furnished for nothing. What concerns them most is not to be deceived clandestinely, for the final result is the same: they are practically obliged to repudiate the wife in such a case, for it is unworthy of a man to forgive, and in addition they will be the laughingstock of the population.

Several of our boatmen made the following speech to their wives at the time of leaving for a two-months' tour: "If you have enough of me in my absence, if you cannot wait for me, go and take my belongings to the house of such-and-such a brother; I shall not be angry and will not do anything to you on my return."

Custom is so favorable to the women that practically nothing guarantees the private contract made between the man and woman at the time of marriage. Since this contract is essentially founded on a material association, the man cutting the clearing and the woman farming it, one might believe that the woman would be held to fulfilling her contract even in case of the marriage's breaking up, but there is nothing of the sort.

/157 cont./

589 [589] A woman who has just been divorced does not remarry immediately. Several months, sometimes a year or more, may go by between two unions, a period during which she thinks only of "living it up," indulging in all the adventures she wishes. This attitude is considered normal, and the elders have nothing to say to her provided that she does not fall into pikadu, or cause any scandal, and that the period does not last too long.

[586] We have cited the example of Aguba, a pretty girl of 18, who at the end of 1957 had just broken with her husband Paifiki /sic/ after only one year of living together. She was living with Lènga who brought her up; she was cutting a small clearing herself. Beyond that, she had no other concern but to indulge in all the adventures she liked. Men used to come to solicit [836] her favors discreetly, each one reserving his day. From one she would ask for a camisa, from another, soap, kerosene, etc.

[429] Her guardian Lènga used to press her to take another husband, but she could not forbid her to live thus, having given with the pãngi her freedom as a woman.

[587] She contracted a new marriage in May or June, 1958 after leading an irregular life for more than six months.

836 As a matter of fact, things go on with great discretion. A man is notified in secret by his sister or /female/ cousin that such-and-such a woman noticed him during a dance, that she will await him at her home on such-and-such a night. At night on the river, one perceives boats which pass close to the shore, [504] advancing silently. In each village there are secondary landings which allow nocturnal visitors to arrive at night without being noticed and to leave again before dawn. /158/

[684] If a woman lacks this discretion and if her life is openly dissolute, her mother will beat her and the head of the lineage will inflict punishments on her, but she will not be sent away; in no case can anyone be expelled from his natal village.

/196 cont./

673 --Vengeance; if someone believes himself to be the
[754] victim of witchcraft, he must under no circumstances engage
[627] in counterwitchcraft or invoke his ancestors against his enemy.
He may ask only for the protection of the ɔbia. It is Odun who
[784] will avenge him by sooner or later killing the evil-doer.

[683] --Violence in any form whatever. It is regarded as a particularly serious offense against the laws of Odun to strike with an armed hand and to make human blood flow (1).

● [684]

1. That explains the strictness with which the society of the Refugee Blacks limits the right of punishment granted to the wronged husband, who must strike only with bare fists in front of witnesses, never in the bush nor on the river. Fear of seeing human blood flow explains the reticence of the Boni toward minor surgical operations.

[826]
[952]

[641] --Any attack on personal liberty by material or moral
[586] coercion; in particular, neither a man nor woman may be constrained to remain in a marriage which has ceased to please him; nobody may be forced to reside here or there.

[832] The forms of magic so popular among West Indians, aimed at capturing a person's love, are for this reason rejected by the Refugee Blacks and considered as a form of wisi.

[769] --Any evocation of the spirits of the dead, even to ask them for protection, other than in the public ceremonies
[754] provided for by custom. Thus nobody must go to the cemetery to pray alone on his parents' grave. Whoever would do that would immediately be considered as wisima.

784 /228 cont./

They are the object of three kunu:

613 --One exercised by a Papa gadu god whose bearer up into
786 1956 was Kotoïda († Oct. 1956), who bequeathed it to ○
787 Mani (Afi lineage, d12).

784 --The other exercised by a yɔrka of the Lapé lineage.
785 This kunu dates from about 60 years ago; Alémin (Afi lineage,
613 b3, Kormotibo village), 80 years old in 1957, had when he was young cut a clearing in a place which was found to be an
[787] old abandoned Boni cemetery (opposite Maripasoula). Some time afterward, a yɔrka revealed itself in a woman of the Lapé lineage, saying that it was exercising a kunu against the family of the sacrilegious person.

[761] It is to this yɔrka, whose bearer is M... (L2, Boniville), that the death of Kotoïda in October, 1956 is especially attributed.

--A third kunu is exercised by A..., of the Papaïston 2
● [684] lineage. A... had committed pikadu. Surprised by Alémin (Afi lineage), he had paid the latter to obtain his silence.
[762] But Alémin had talked. Dishonored, A... committed suicide with a gunshot; some time afterward his yɔrka revealed itself in Alémin; it exercises a kunu on this lineage.

613 Situation of the other lineages with respect to the kunu. The
614 Papaïston lineage is divided into two groups: Papaïston 1 (the
784 principal one) and Papaïston 2, of which there remain only three living members: two women and one young man. This remainder of a lineage continues to bear its own kunu, which is unique and separate from that of the principal group.

The principal group forms a unit with respect to the kunu.

The Lapé lineage, cut from the point of view of genealogy into two pieces, forms a unit with respect to the kunu. We
[114] have been able to collect only fragmentary information on the various kunu of this village.

/228 cont./

784 A kunu is exercised by a Dipélu yɔrka, borne in 1958 by
775 a Loka woman. It is invoked before the fraga tiki of l'Enfant
778 Perdu village (Dipélu I). Sometimes a broko dɛ is celebrated
768 for it in the same forms as the ceremony of the eighth day
613 after death.

784 We have likewise not been able to collect complete
613 information on the kunu of the Kotika lineage. This lineage,
114 divided into three fractions, forms a unit with respect to the
kunu.

784 A kunu is exercised by the yɔrka of a Surinam Creole
613 assassinated in former times by a member of the lineage. Its
775 bearer in 1958 was Todo (K1, E68), a man of the Kotika lo
789 living in Boniville. In 1958 a young woman of the lineage,
[761] Awini (K1, E37), died suddenly; the yɔrka revealed that it
[684] had struck Awini because she had a liaison with Sintamann
(K3, E145), thus committing pikadu. The idea of the collective responsibility of the lineage is so deeply accepted by the Boni that the near relatives of the dead woman did not reproach Sintamann at all.

784 /229/ A yɔrka of the Kotika lineage may exercise a kunu on
613 the Djuka. This is the case of an affair going back to 1950;
775 a young woman died some time after having a serious discussion
761 with a Djuka woman who had hit her. Deaths among the Djuka
619 these last years had been attributed to its vengeance.

784 It seems that there is no other kunu exercised by a Djuka
619 upon a Boni lineage and vice versa. This is surprising, con-
613 sidering the fights which in former times set the two nations against each other.

621 The Djuka and Saramaka living isolated in the midst
784 of the Boni know their kunu, which were revealed to them in
[755] childhood. In case of sickness, they employ divinatory pro-
cedures in order to know what kunu is concerned, then they
[613] make offerings. But in case of serious illness, they are forced to go back to the village of origin of their lineage.

/230 cont./

784 787 776 the lineage; questioned, this god declared that it had something to complain about in the bad condition of the house which the members of the lineage had erected to it on its order; the roof of leaves had not been changed and it was raining through.

784 684 It happens also, but as an exception, that the god has sanctioned an offense against morals or more precisely, against the social law, such as the breaking of an interdiction, pikadu (incest in the wider sense, an offense against exogamy). It is necessary to understand that in the thought of the Refugee Blacks, incest unleashes the existing kunu but does not create a new kunu.

In October, 1952, Dolo, a young man of 25 of the [787] Awara Bakka lo, died almost suddenly. Divination revealed [761] that he had been killed by the kunu (it was a Papa gadu which [613] had intervened) in order to sanction an offense committed some time previously by another member of the lo named P.... The latter, a notoriously depraved individual, had committed incest with his own sister.

784 776 782 [787] When the divinity has made known through the mouth of its bearer the causes of its act, the assembled members of the lineage implore it, ask it not to pursue its vengeance; the divinity then requires an offering: for example, if it is a Papa gadu, it will require bottles of beer, some red and white cloth which will be immersed in a given place in the river. It may also require dances in its honor, celebrated by the other possessed people in the village. If it is an Ampuku, it will demand rum, dark-blue cloth which will be exposed in a remote place in the forest. An offering of this kind represents a relatively small sum, even for the Boni (several thousand francs in 1952). The god then declares itself appeased. But it does not pardon and it will resume /231/ its vengeance [183] at the first cause. Thus the Boni have hope only in a rigorous 776 observance of customary law and the rites. There are divinities 787 which appeared to be thus appeased for a long time and to

/231 cont./

761 [784] [684] --In 1952, Dolo (Awara Bakka) dies almost all of a sudden with the symptoms of peritonitis: kunu, punishment for incest committed by another member of the lineage.

--In 1952, Malèndo, ten years old, son of Osaya (Awara Bakka) accidentally drowns: natural accident (ɔ̃ŋgɔ́ku).

[784] [776] --In 1954, Bénitì (Dju) dies at nearly 75 years of age: kunu of a Papa gadu.

[784] [754] --In 1954, Agyémési (Aw.B.) dies almost all of a sudden: killed by Odun (he was a wisimã).

--In 1955, Tabiki (Awara Bakka) dies at over 80: natural illness.

[784] [775] --In 1956, Kotoida /sic/ (Afi lineage) dies suddenly, aged about 50: kunu of a yɔrka.

784 776 --In 1957, F... (Lapé) is gravely ill with symptoms of typhoid: kunu of a Papa gadu.

[753] [761] --In 1957, Sokodo (Dip. II) dies at 40: kunu of a Kãntamasu.

75 761 784 /232/ One observes that in the 15 cases cited here, the kunu interferes ten times, while in three cases natural causes: illness, accident, were assumed.

772 In reality, the Refugee Blacks do not have the conception of a natural world, subject to known or knowable laws, which is set against a supernatural world. The intervention of a Papa gadu is neither more nor less natural than an illness or an accident. There is only, on the plane of human life, more or less frequent intervention by suprahuman forces.

812 The intervention of these forces is made according to laws which embrace the totality of beings and things, laws which men cannot understand but of which they believe they have a partial and empirical knowledge.